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## Sturtevant hopes new year brings new businesses

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Special to the Journal Sentinel

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**Sturtevant** - With residential and commercial development continuing at a rapid pace but also facing the loss of 603 jobs because Internet Corp. is closing, Village Administrator Stephen Compton and Village President Steve Jansen look to 2005 with a mix of excitement and anxiety.

"There are a lot of good things to work toward next year," Jansen said. "But we would be foolish to ignore the challenge of attracting businesses to provide services and jobs to our residents."

Compton agreed.

"It takes a long time to get a business going and keep it going, but they can leave very quickly," he said. "We seem to take five steps forward and then take two steps back. You have to focus on the three steps you didn't lose."

The village has contracted with Barrientos Design and Consulting of Milwaukee to conduct a study of how residents, local business owners, government agencies and other parties want to see Highway 11 and Wisconsin St. revitalized.

A meeting with a focus group in November attracted a crowd of 60. Several more are planned to help Barrientos compile recommendations.

Study results are expected to be released sometime in February.

"This study is one of the most important things the village has ever done," Jansen said. "From the results of the study, the village will be able to put together a plan that can be passed down from year-to-year and from board-to-board."

He added that the development and growth taking place, combined with taking action on the study's recommendations, allows the board and village staff to more fully promote Sturtevant as a place to live, play and work.

The loss of Internet, Jansen said, presents a challenge to the village to attract more businesses to the village that provide a mix of employment opportunities.

Compton has long been a proponent of offering residents and visitors a variety of shops and services and said the focus group discussions support that.

"From what I can tell, most people indicate they want to see more clothing retailers as well as a major food store here in the village," Compton said. "Those wants can be a reality and will provide job stability for our residents."

And finally, after several years of false starts, the new Amtrak depot will be built in The Renaissance business park.

"It's been a long, drawn-out process, but the deal is done and by next fall, we will have a new, beautiful depot in our village," Jansen said.

The village will welcome a 16-screen theater building to The Renaissance that is scheduled to open in time for the 2005 holiday movie season.

The Marcus Corp., based in Milwaukee, is behind the project and already operates two other theaters in Racine though it is unclear what, if anything, will be done with those sites.

Compton said the theater opens up a new segment of commercial development not previously explored and hopes the theater encourages other hospitality-based businesses to come to Sturtevant.

"This is an exciting time in Sturtevant," Jansen said. "I love this job, and I feel like there is still so much to do."

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